10: d'Orleans--320-321 T-3 (1891-92)· 1894 Laos
116, 411, 438, 443, 778

"They [LSS: women merchants in Luang Prabang] have a very diversified stock of goods to choose from, including gold embroidered shirts made by the Lus, Siam brocaded vests, old silver, bracelets made of Kas bronze, and hatchets and other weapons in old bronze; these latter are very scarce and difficult to buy, as they are preserved with superstitious reverence by the families to which they belong. The hatchets, some of which are straight while others are curved, are very characteristic, while the ivory-handled knives represent yaks, the genii of the Buddhist religion, [321] similar to those which are found in the interior of Borneo."

10: d'Orleans--353 [2] T-3 (1891-92) 1894 Laos
116, 411, 531, 644

"Men of the king's household bear swords, the sheath of which is of chased gold, while the handle is of horn studded with precious stones. These swords are over 200 years old, and very fine, but the blade is common. Others carry lances with wooden shafts and silver bands at the top, the iron of the lance being encased in a red sheath. I also notice a javelin, the iron of which is crescent shaped with a notch at the lower end."

23: Franck--271 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 276, 411, 482, 492 Ethnic subgroup

"The men, [EJ: of the 'Black Miao'] and sometimes the women, carry crude daggers in home-made sheaths; some had a long slender rifle, a few of them crossbows of a simple form, and most of them smoked or carried in their sashes pipes of sometimes elaborately tortured shapes. They use pack-oxen as well as little horses, but most of them, of both sexes, carry in a basket on their backs, though Chinese influence perhaps has led some to fasten two baskets at the ends of a short, stiff whole bamboo over a shoulder, thereby losing all the advantage of the long and supple shoulder-pole of China and Annam."

23; Franck--326-327 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 206, 291, 411

"It looked strange to see men [327] wearing only a loin-cloth, and a dagger in a scabbard woven like a basket and held by a fiber band across the chest, putting up telegraph-poles; but the French insist on being able to talk to one another anywhere in Indo-China, and government ownership of telegraph lines has at least one advantage over the high-cost private system of the United States and China."

23: Franck--331 [2] T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 262, 411, 415, 482 Ethnic subgroup

"These fellows [EJ: Kha] carried a slim ration of glutinous rice in little round baskets with a telescope cover, and some uncooked rice in a cloth at the back of the waist, just as do some South American Indians. At their sides hung a kind of machete, in a sheath made of half bamboo with wooden strips across it, much the sort of thing a Boy Scout turned loose in the woods might contrive. They were as small as upper grammar-school boys, and though they looked hardier than almost any tame people, they were really even less useful as carriers than the Pwun. They prefer to carry by a band across the forehead, but as my baggage was not arranged for that method most of them were forced to endure one end of the stiff whole-bamboo that takes the place of the wiser springy split-bamboo or hickory carrying-poles of the Chinese--because one of them alone cannot carry a real load. Yet on the whole the long file of silent, rather anemic fellows made better time, thanks perhaps to their lighter loads, than those of the day before."

23: Franck--335 T-2 (1924) 1926 Laotians
116, 224, 411 Ethnic subgroup

"On the swift slope we passed an old man and a boy [EJ: of the Kha group] with a crossbow and some pencil-like arrows, who were evidently stalking birds, for all the rain."

25: Brodrick--107-108 S-3 (1939) 1948 Laotians-1-2
116, 224, 411

"Nowhere in the Laos is the big-game shooting as good or as exciting as in Cambodia or in Annam. It is forbidden throughout the Laos to shoot elephant except in self-defence and the rhinoceros is as rare as in any other part of Indo-China. The Chinese have, for centuries past, imported vast quantities of rhinoceros horn for medicine and for carving into those rhinoceros horn cups now so sought after by collectors. No cups have been fashioned now for a century or more and, indeed, many are broken up and ground down to supply the demand for tonics, aphrodisiacs and antidotes among the Chinese. But in Mouhot's time, not a century ago, rhinoceros was fairly common in all the region between the Meking [HD: in Luang Prabang province] and the Annam Range, and the old traveller whose body lies buried in the jungle not far from Luang-Prabang, tells a vivid tale of his hunting:

'We were eight men, all armed with guns. Mine was fitted with a sharp bayonet. The Laotians carried only iron javelin-blades mounted on strong bamboo sticks, but their chief had a long, sharp [108] sword, not heavy, but very supple and almost unbreakable. After about two miles march through the forest, we heard the branches crackle and the dry leaves rustle. Motioning us to slow down and to hold ourselves ready, the chief strode forward. Soon we heard a piercing cry. It was the chief's signal that the beast was not far off. Then the chief began striking two bamboo rods together while his men shouted so as to force the rhinoceros from his lair. A few

minutes later, the animal, furious at being disturbed in his retreat, came straight at us. He was a very large male. With no sign of fear, but as joyful as though he were sure of his victory, the intrepid hunter advanced towards the monster and, with poised lance defiant, awaited the onrush. The animal charged straight forwards, his mouth wide open and alternately raising and lowering his head. Just as he came within range, the man flung his javelin, from a distance of about five feet, into the beast's mouth. Then, he left the weapon in place and walked back to us. We remained at a respectful distance in order to watch the rhinoceros's death-agony without danger to ourselves. He gave out the most terrifying roars and rolled on his back in dreadful convulsions while our men shouted for joy. A few minutes later, as the beast was vomiting streams of blood, we were able to approach him. I then shook hands with the chief and complimented him upon his skill and courage. He replied that I alone had the right to finish off the quarry and this I did by ramming my long bayonet into its throat. The chief, having jerked his javelin from out the body of Behemoth, offered the weapon to me and asked me to accept it as a souvenir. I gave him in exchange a magnificent European dagger.'''

149: Reinach--101a G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

142
616
291.
411
482

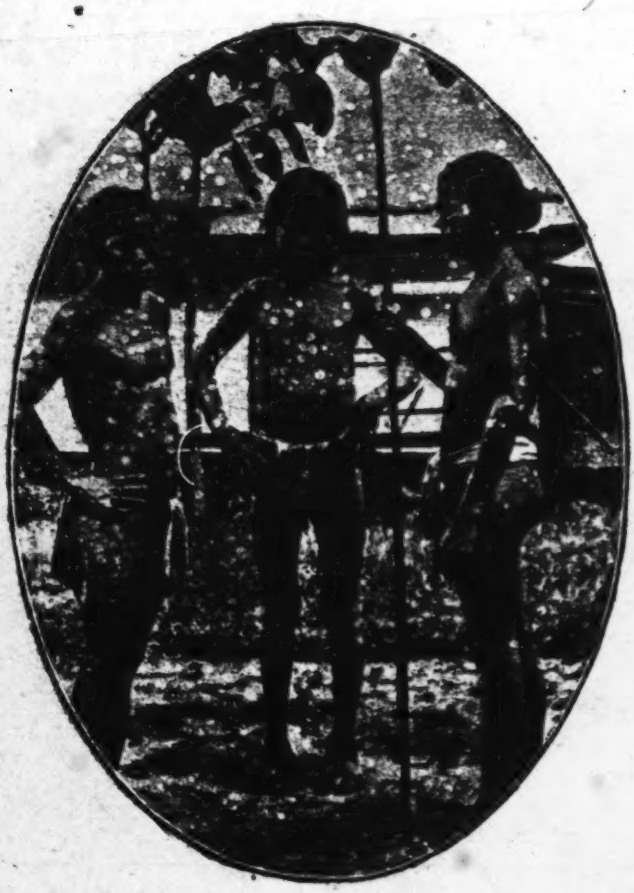

Fig. 36 /p. 135/ Typical Khas of the province of Stung-Treng.

441
29

149: Reinach--102a G-3 (no date) 1901 AMI Indochina
Laotians AM8

Fig. 87 /p. 187/ Typical Khas of southern Laos.

291 cover their bust with a small short jacket which is very close-fitting and bright in color. It has a heart-shaped opening on the chest and, like the men's jacket, is ornamented with galloons and passementerie. For celebrations and ceremonies Lu women wear a heavy turban on their head which is folded flat or pleated, shaped like a mitre and generally made of black silk spangled with gold.

301 Both men and women pierce the lobes of their ears [246] with a broad opening, into which they introduce hollow gold or silver cylinders which are sometimes as large as three centimeters in diameter.

306 Great lovers of jewelry, the Lus number skilled jewelers and goldsmiths among them who make hair coil plaques, ear cylinders, flat braided metal belts with wide chased and checkered buckles, bracelets, rings, hilts and sheaths for daggers and swords, etc. [Illustration alongside text here]

411 The Lus almost always wear daggers and swords. Each of them, so
343 to speak, possesses a rifle, generally flintlock, which by the shape of the stock, the length of the barrel and the many bands which adorn it greatly resembles the long Moukhala so dear to our Arabs in Algeria.

[361] Lu villages are clean, and the houses are arranged in a checkerboard pattern.

[231] The Lus have a high reputation as breeders of oxen and horses.

527 A great lover of celebrations and parades, this boisterous people sets off gunpowder at every opportunity, and there is no festival, private or public, so small that it is not accompanied by salvos and fireworks.

[77] From their contact with the Burmese the men have retained a
535 [247] [Illustration] [248] [Blank page] [249] taste for dancing and for sword fights mingled with dance steps in which they manifest a real grace and elegance.

"Among other forms of amusement, the men execute, with a truly remarkable suppleness and skill, sword dances which are perfectly elegant. Naked to the waist, with their trousers rolled up and bunched and a wooden sword in each hand whose cutting edge has been dipped in dye so that the thrusts will leave a mark, the two champions confront one another. Moulinets, parries and returns follow one another without apparent effort, and the movements are undulating and rapid but without any abruptness. The men seem to be caressing one another, not fighting, and yet the slashes leave their colored traces on the skin of the vanquished. Direct thrusts are forbidden, but the entire body from head to foot is fair game for the opponent. Thus during the

411

Fig. 70 /p. 259/ Khas of Xieng-Khong.

149: Reinach--188a G-3 (no date) 1901 AM1 Indochina
Laotians AM8

411
482
516
291

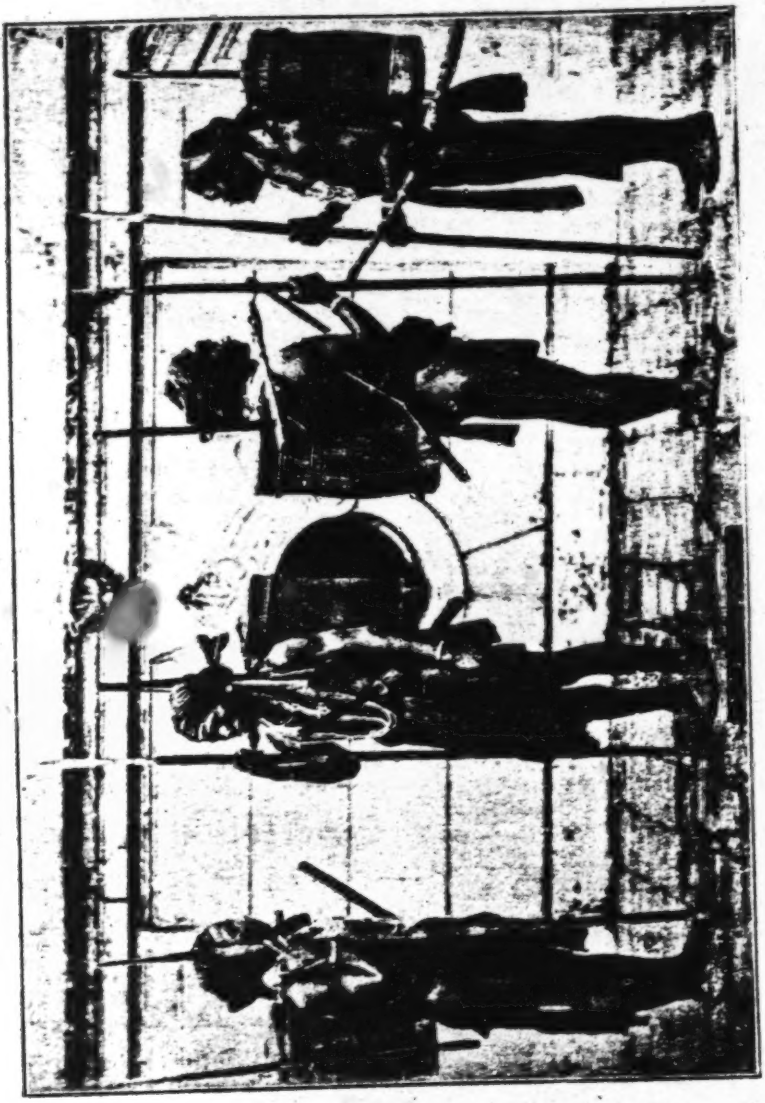

Fig. 71/p. 261/ Typical Khas of the province of Stung-Treng. (Photographed at Saigon in 1898.)

equipment.

●411 [264] "It should be noted that these folk do not have rifles. Their crossbows are quite large, and shoot pointed barbed arrows, which are poisoned in time of war, over great distances.

"The spears are of average length. The shafts are made of very beautiful barnboo, and the iron points are of varied shapes.

"The swords have long hilts ornamented with tin, and the blades are slightly curved.

"Among the Djarais bucklers are made of wood and shielded with tin. Among the Kasengs they are made of buffalo hide, and among the Cedangs of buckskin with the fleece left on.

"Among the Cedangs the bucklers take the shape of a shield, while their shape varies among the others." (Le Laos français.)

[Lieutenant-colonel Tournier (Superior Resident in Laos). "Notice sur le Laos français, " in Revue Indochinoise, Hanoi, 1900.]

563 619 Khas of mixed blood. In the section on races we have seen what mixtures were produced from crossings between Khas and other members of the great Thai family. Their distribution is as follows:

1. The Phou-Phays and Phou-Thengs are found scattered everywhere throughout northern Laos;

2. Sos and Seks are found in Luang-Prabeng, Tran-Ninh and Cammon;

3. The Soues inhabit the high valleys of the Se-Bang-Hien and the Sedone and the northern slopes of the plateau of the Bolovens.

The evolution of all these mixed blood varieties is not yet complete, and many have partly retained their original dialects. Certain tribes, however, have completely adopted the mores and languages of the dominant races to which they owe their existence, and these have pagodas, bonzes, etc.

RACES OF MONGOL ORIGIN

619 563 We know that individuals of Mongol origin inhabit northern Laos and are grouped in three principal varieties known as Hos, Meos and Yaos.

The Hos. The Hos are inhabitants of Yunnan who came to Laos either with the robber bands (1875-1888) or with caravans. [265] [Illustration] [266] [Blank page] [267]

They settled in Laos, abandoning their guns and packs to become farmers, hog breeders, tea planters, ect.

Hunting

224 Hunting, for the inhabitants of Laos, is another form of scavenging, since it procures them either live animals or the remains of the same without any great labor or expense.

●411 For the Laotian, time does not count. He makes his powder himself, and with the exception of firearms his hunting devices are also 224 of his own fabrication. With the help of this far from perfect equipment he is nevertheless able to capture live elephants and to procure the ivory and remains of those which he kills, as well as the hide, [438 talons, bones and horns of a multitude of other animals. All these products are so many trade commodities for him. The flesh of all 262] these animals, moreover, makes a sizeable contribution to the diet of the Laotian hunter. It is a feast for him, for his family and for his entourage.

[325 [344] The natives have a perfect knowledge of the habits and customs of all the representatives of the local fauna. Patient, adroit, 224 endowed with excellent powers of hearing and sight which are further developed and sharpened by practice, they are not afraid to attack the tiger and other large animals despite their rudimentary weapons.

Lying hidden for hours at a time, motionless and silent and abstaining from smoking, the hunter waits for his victim without losing his self-control. When it approaches within a few meters of him, his sure eye and untrembling arm enable him to strike it dead with a bullet or with a poisoned arrow shot from a powerful crossbow.

One is astounded at the results achieved with weapons which are so imperfect, as much by their rudimentary construction as by their age, and which often lead one to fear more for the hunter's life than for the beast's. We must admire these men who, although reputed to be cowardly, brave danger with such primitive weapons and go in search of wild animals in their very lairs, killing them at almost point-blank range so that oftentimes the wad from the gun singes the animal's fur or the arrow goes in one side and out the other.

411 The firearms used by the Laotians are flintlock or muzzle-loading 439 rifles, some of which are of Siamese or Burmese manufacture. Others are imported from Europe through trade or in private cargoes. There are also old regulation rifles, British and others, chiefly those which bear the image of a cock and the word "Tower" stamped on the lock or breech.

The Laotian, as we have said before, makes his powder himself. 411 ●
He also casts his bullets, which are usually only shapeless masses of lead or iron. In view of this fact it is not surprising, with such ammunition, that his guns do not have even a medium range. He is therefore forced to shoot from a very short distance, often less than five meters, if he wants not merely to hit his prey but to strike it in the right place so as to fell it on the spot and not risk becoming the victim of a wounded beast.

[345] European weapons tempt him because of their careful construction and long range, but if by chance he does try them they do not yield the same results in his hands as his own do, imperfect as they are. Thus he prefers his own weapons to ours, finding them better adapted to his eye and his arm.

For several years now, however, double-barreled hunting rifles [439]
of an inferior quality and Winchester muskets of the already outdated 1878 model have been imported into Laos through Siam and Burma. The careful maintenance which such weapons require, the high price of ammunition and the difficulty of obtaining new supplies are all reasons preventing their widespread use. Thus they are, so to [554] ↑
speak, only luxury items possessed by a few fortunate Laotians who have acquired them out of ostentation rather than for use.

Firearms and crossbows are not the only hunting devices used in Laos. Indeed, there is no lack of ingenious instruments, some simple and some complicated, but always perfectly adapted to the particular purpose to which they are destined. They are made with perfect artistry and care, with a view towards capturing the most diverse forms of wild life, from the largest pachyderms such as the elephant down to the smallest bird. Traps, deadfalls, snares, springes, nets, birdcalls, etc. complete the Laotians' hunting equipment. All these devices are manufactured by them during the rainy season, when they are confined to their houses. They are like our peasants who profit from the long winter evenings to make all the little things which they will need during the course of the year.

Rifles and crossbows are used only in hunting the larger wild animals. The natives use special methods to capture elephants.

This pachyderm once lived in great herds in all the parts of 224
Laos which offered grassy plains, valleys and high plateaus, especially where certain varieties of bamboo, wild banana trees and gramineaceous plants which were to its taste grew. Nowadays, because

323 The potters' methods and equipment do not differ from those which are in widespread use everywhere.

The method of firing depends on the nature of the article, and firing may be done either in kilns dug out of the clay soil, in the banks of watercourses, or under stacks of rice straw. Wood or rice straw is used to fire the kilns.

In some regions articles are given a shiny black patina resembling graphite by firing them for a second time in paddy husks.

326 778 411 415 Brass-founding. One has only to explore the pagodas of Laos in order to realize that brass-founding used to be held in honor. Religious statues can be found which are sometimes of great [458] weight and usually of quite fine workmanship and taste, taking into account, to be sure, the quite special manner in which they conceive esthetics.

Although the crucibles have not been fired for many long years for casting such large pieces, the industry of brass-founding continues to be exercised by a certain number of specialists who are content with producing religious statuettes, necessities for betel, bells for elephants and livestock, various kinds of vases, cuspidors, etc.

This industry is an extremely ancient one in the land. It was certainly practiced during the Bronze Age, as is attested by the spear-heads, daggers, hatchets and halberds which have been found in northern Laos and which can now be seen in the Saint-Germain museum.

[821 172] It is interesting to note that the inhabitants of Laos attribute a meteoric origin to objects of the Bronze Age, as also to those of the Age of Polished Stone. They believe that these objects fall from the sky when it thunders, and that they are produced by lightning.

The following are some of the methods used by Laotian founders. Casting is always done by the lost wax process.

325 532 Casting statues. On an initial rough clay model, the artist applies a layer of fine, soft and well-pugged clay which he shapes in a more careful manner. Then after covering the statue, which is already much more than a rough draft, with a layer of bees-wax of the proper thickness, he finishes modeling the statue on the wax, inserting all the details and all the ornaments which it is to include. Polishing a bit here, engraving there, setting precious stones or simply glass between the eyelids to represent eyes, and inserting gold lips where the mouth is to be located, he gives the

657
659 it possible to draw up the tax rolls for the following year.

657 A head tax is owed by every able-bodied man between the ages of eighteen and sixty, except for bonzes, pagoda servants, the native authorities, men who have served for four years in the civil guard, militiamen on active duty, invalids and liberated slaves.

There are four categories of registered persons:

1. Those of the great Thai race, who pay five francs and also owe twenty days of service in kind in Upper Laos, and ten in Lower Laos. This service may be redeemed upon payment of five francs;

2. Those of the other races such as Khas, Meos, Yaos, etc., who pay 2.50 francs and owe ten days of service in kind, redeemable for 2.50 francs;

3. The Annamites, who pay a head tax of five francs and do not owe any service in kind;

4. Foreign Orientals, who pay a head tax of 12.50 francs per year and do not owe any statute labor. If they are merchants, they pay a license fee of five francs per shop.

[500] B. Indirect taxes

The indirect taxes include:

1. Travel permits and passports;
2. Permits for weapons;
3. Administrative fines;
4. Local taxes levied on products and animals exported from Laos.

[484] For travel permits, Laotians pay a fixed fee of 0.50 franc per person and per permit. Foreign Orientals pay 1.875 francs for a permit which is good for three months.

[411] Permits for weapons occasion the collection of a tax of 1.50 francs. Annual renewal of the permit is obligatory, and costs 0.75 franc.

[421] There are as yet no taxes on land in Laos. It would have been extremely difficult, if not impossible, to levy such a tax in view of the present state of the country, which has no land registry, and with the system of property (1) such as it exists at present.

423 (1) "As regards public domain, we have maintained the custom which is consecrated by the local laws and usages. By virtue of these usages and these laws, the State is sole proprietor of the land and everything under it, without any exception, no matter how it is being exploited or what establishments have been made there,